

CITY OF IONIA
Planning Commission
January 10, 2007
Regular Meeting Minutes

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Lynn Lafler called the Regular Meeting of the City of Ionia Planning Commission to order at 4:05 PM.

ROLL CALL: Roll Call revealed Commissioners David Cook, Mark Jennings, Gordon Kelley (arrived at 4:07 PM), Lynn Lafler, John Milewski and Ted Paton present.

Staff present included City Manager Jason Eppler and Community Development Director Larry Harvey. Bruce Roetman and Don May were also in attendance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA Chairman Lafler reviewed the agenda with the Commission. After review, it was moved by Commissioner Cook, seconded by Commissioner Milewski to approve the agenda with the addition of Election of Officers under New Business. MOTION CARRIED.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES The Commission reviewed the minutes of the December 13, 2006 regular meeting and the minutes of the December 21, 2006 special meeting. After review, it was moved by Commissioner Cook, seconded by Commissioner Paton to approve the minutes of both meetings as presented. MOTION CARRIED.

PUBLIC COMMENTS Bruce Roetman representing Mr. Don May, May's Party Store, reviewed with the Commission Mr. May's conceptual plans for replacing the current party store located at the south west corner of Main and Cleveland Streets. Mr. Roetman reported that Mr. May has operated the store for the past thirteen years and is in the process of selling the store and has located a buyer. Mr. Roetman reported that Mr. May would like to assist the new owner in getting things in order for the replacement of the existing structure. Mr. Roetman reviewed with the Commission a conceptual plan for the new store. The current store is less than 1,000 square feet and the new store is proposed to about twice that size. Approximately 8 off-street parking spaces will be created.

Chairman Lafler stated that the property on which the store is located is zoned R1 – One-Family Residential which does not permit retail operations. The current store is a legal non-conforming use. He further reported that if the store is to be replaced with a new store, the City will likely need to amend the zoning ordinance to permit this type of use as a special land use in this zoning district. The Commission discussed conditions that would be necessary in an amendment. They also discussed with Msrs. Roetman and May the timeframe for amending the ordinance. The consensus of the Commission was to have staff develop a proposed amendment to be reviewed at the February meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Discussion Regarding Current Blight/Nuisance Ordinances: City Manager Eppler stated that at the December regular meeting, Commissioners requested a report regarding the City's current blight/nuisance ordinances and an explanation of the current enforcement practices. He stated that Mr. Harvey is responsible for enforcement as the "authority having jurisdiction" and has prepared a report to review with the Commission.

Mr. Harvey discussed with the Commission current ordinances that enforces, reviewed a report outlining the areas of enforcement and the problem areas over the past year and areas where enforcement and the ordinances could be improved. Several Commissioners shared areas of concern and offered suggestions by which the ordinances can be improved. The Commission also discussed the City's current rental property inspection ordinance and suggested that the Commission make a more in-depth review of this ordinance at the next meeting. Staff agreed to collect similar ordinances from other communities for review.

Review of Main Street Planning Company's Master Plan Update Proposal: City Manager Eppler stated that Main Street Planning has forwarded a proposal to the City for continuing the process of updating the City's Master Plan. The Commission completed the SWOT analysis late last fall and in order to comply with the new statutory process of updating the Master Plan every five years, it is necessary

to continue along with this process. He reviewed the proposal with the Commission in order to narrow the scope of service and define the critical elements that the Commission would like to complete. Commissioners offered their suggestions which will be conveyed to Mr. Johnson at Main Street so the proposal can be refined.

Election of Officers: Chairman Lafler reported that the Commission's Rules of Procedure require that the Commission elect a Chair and Vice-Chair each January. Mr. Lafler reported that he has served as Chair for several years and would like another Commissioner to have the opportunity to serve. The current Vice-Chair is Commissioner Milewski.

Chair - After discussion it was moved by Commissioner Lafler, seconded by Commissioner Cook to elect John Milewski as Chairman. MOTION CARRIED.

Vice Chair – It was moved by Commissioner Lafler, seconded by Commissioner Kelley to elect Mark Jennings as Vice Chairman. MOTION CARRIED.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Commissioner Cook, seconded by Commissioner Paton to adjourn the Planning Commission Meeting at 5:30 PM. MOTION CARRIED.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jason Eppler
City Manager/Recording Secretary